

REMARKS

This is in response to the outstanding Office Action dated September 9, 2008. Claims 12-22 are pending. Applicants have withdrawn claims 19-22 without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 12 has been amended. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 12-17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner questioned, in claim 12, whether the motor acts directly or indirectly on the roving package. Applicants have amended paragraphs [0019], [0037], [0048] of the Specification and claim 12 to replace the language “acting directly on” with “driving”. Support for the amended Specification paragraphs and claim 12 can be found in paragraph [0048] of the Specification and in Fig. 1. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, has been addressed.

Applicants have provided replacement Figures 1 and 2 to replace original Figures 1-3. Support for the replacement Figures 1 and 2 are replete throughout the Specification and no new matter has been added.

Applicants have amended paragraphs [0020], [0026] and [0033] of the Specification to better define the invention. Support for the amended paragraphs can be found in Fig. 1. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, independent claim 12 was rejected 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Droux (WO 02/084005) in view of Picone (U.S. No. 4,345,927). Applicants traverse this rejection for several reasons.

Independent claim 12 provides a method of preparing a continuous strand mat. The method includes paying-out a roving package such that the roving is pushed from the roving package. The rate of the pay-out of the roving package is solely determined by a motor driving the roving package. As the roving is payed-out, the roving passes

through a nozzle provided with an injection of at least one fluid. The fluid is mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle.

As a first reason Applicants traverse the rejection, the Droux reference fails to disclose a method including paying-out a roving package such that the roving is pushed from the roving package and wherein the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is solely determined by a motor driving the roving package. Rather, the Droux reference discloses a system including a pulling means (7) positioned downstream from the roving package. The pulling means (7) is configured to pull the fiber bundle (column 3, line 30 and column 4, lines 39-40) in cooperation with the motor (3) such that the means (7) guarantees a constant production output (column 5, lines 40-41). There is simply no disclosure in the Droux reference of a method including paying-out a roving package such that the roving is pushed from the roving package and wherein the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is solely determined by a motor driving the roving as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12.

To overcome the deficiencies of the Droux reference, the Examiner relies on the Picone reference. The Examiner asserts the Picone reference teaches a nozzle where the fluid is directed toward the nozzle exit. As a second reason Applicants traverse the rejection, the Picone reference fails disclose a nozzle provided with an injection of at least one fluid, wherein the fluid is mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. Rather, as clearly shown in Fig. 4 of the Picone reference, a fluid enters the accelerating means (34) from the conduit (62) in a direction substantially transverse to the direction of travel of the strands (12) and also transverse to an axis defined by the entrance opening (63) and exit opening (64) of the accelerating means (7). One skilled in the art would appreciate the fluid disclosed in the Picone reference is not mainly introduced in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. One skilled in the art would also appreciate the accelerating means (7) of the Picone reference would require further modifications in order to introduce the fluid in a direction toward the

exit of the nozzle. Accordingly, the nozzle disclosed in the Picone reference does not disclose the method of introducing a fluid in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12.

Even a combination of the Droux and Picone references, as suggested by the Examiner, does not encompass the combination of limitations of the method as claimed in Applicants' amended independent claim 12. Specifically, a combination of the Droux and Picone references does not show a method having a combination of limitations including paying-out a roving package such that the roving is pushed from the roving package and wherein the rate of the pay-out of the roving package is solely determined by a motor driving the roving package and introducing a fluid in a direction toward the exit of the nozzle. Rather, a combination of the Droux and Picone references provides the method of producing constant production mats having the pulling means for paying-out the roving package as provided by the Droux reference and the nozzle having fluid introduced in a transverse direction as provided by the Picone reference.

It is well established that all claim limitation must be taught or suggested. As set forth in the MPEP, at least at §2143.03, in order to establish prima facie obviousness of a claimed invention, all of the claimed limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art, citing In Re Royka, 490 F.2d 981, 180 USPQ 580 (CCPA 1974). In this regard, Applicants' amended independent claim 12 is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103 in view of Droux and Picone. Therefore, the rejection of amended independent claim 12 is no longer applicable and the claim is patentable as amended.

Claims 13-18 depend from amended independent claim 12, and should be patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 12, as set forth above.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants have shown that the claims are in proper form for allowance, and the invention, as defined in the claims, is not taught or disclosed by the applied references. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully

request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of record, and allowance of all claims.